

# The uncanny concept of Mannerism

## *A review of Arnold Hauser's book on the origins of modern art, and its professional background*

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### Introductory remarks

During the last thirty years Arnold Hauser was scarcely present in art historiography. There is a new wave<sup>1</sup> to redeem the relevance of his sweeping-synthetic way of thinking informed by the conceptual framework of German idealist aesthetics, fin de siècle Neo-Kantianism, and by various forms of Hungarian social thought from the early 1900s. Recent scholarship has put forward the reinterpretation of his method that was often subject to a host of contentions. Hauser's oeuvre is still rich in resources for a study of twentieth century European intellectual history and conveys new points for future research. His years in Britain are part of these resources. Despite the very insightful work of Tom Steel<sup>2</sup> mapping the scholarly communities Hauser was in touch with between 1938 and 1977, a great deal of investigation has to be done in this field. Hauser's probably best known book (*The Social History of Art* from 1951) had a vast impact on the Anglophone world, but his exact position in the history of twentieth century intelligentsia (moreover, in the community of German speaking East-Central European émigrés in Cold War England) is still not completely clarified. Even more, the reception of his post-1951 works is almost completely uncharted.

The following original articles were all published by the *Times Literary Supplement* (TLS) in 1965. They document the trenchant assessment of Arnold Hauser's Mannerism-book (also available in the German original from 1964)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See: Paul Stirton, 'The Vienna School in Hungary. Antal, Wilde, and Fülep', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 8, June 13, 2013.; Robert Born, 'The World Art Histories and the Cold War', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 9, December 13, 2013.; Csilla Markója, 'The Young Arnold Hauser and the Sunday Circle: The publication of Hauser's estate preserved in Hungary', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 21, December 2019.

Hauser's position in the history of aesthetic theory, epistemology, and in the theory of science has also undergone serious revision (Cf.: Tamás Demeter, *A szociológizáló hagyomány. A magyar filozófia főárama a 20. században* [The Sociological Tradition. The Main Current of Twentieth Century Hungarian Philosophy], Budapest: Századvég, 2011; Axel Gelfert, 'Art history, the Problem of Style, and Arnold Hauser's Contribution to the History and Sociology of Knowledge', *Studies in East European Thought*, 64, 2012, 121–142.)

<sup>2</sup> Tom Steele, 'Arnold Hauser, Herbert Read and the Social History of Art in Britain', *Britain and Hungary 3. Contacts in architecture design, art, and theory*, Ed. Gyula Ernyey, Budapest: Hungarian University of Craft and Design, 2005, 236–253.

<sup>3</sup> Arnold Hauser, *Der Manierismus. Die Krise der Renaissance und der Ursprung der modernen Kunst*, München: Beck, 1964.

written by an – according to the general policy of TLS – anonymous reviewer, respectively Hauser's reply, and the final comment of the reviewer using the same stinging and unsympathetic voice to address his colleague. On this account, Hauser's book falls short of authenticity and timeliness and is inaccurate in using sources, bibliography, and illustrations – signalling that Hauser is liable to dilettantism in doing art history. Hauser's work is, seemingly, also unable to answer fundamental questions raised by the philosophy of art history: why is an artwork only possible under certain circumstances? The review article was originally meant to be a joint discussion of Hauser's and Daniel Rowland's<sup>4</sup> new books, but almost exclusively comments on the two weighty tomes of the Hungarian-born scholar. In the review article, one can find a single passage on Rowland himself used as a stepping stone to, once more, castigate Hauser. According to the archives of TLS,<sup>5</sup> the text in question was written by art historian Keith Andrews, then archivist at the National Gallery of Scotland.<sup>6</sup>

Andrews' articles – and the less inspired answer of the clearly frustrated author initially charged with superficiality – are good illustrations of completely parallel professional agendas. We also have to mention that Andrews' choice to publish his initial critique had fallen on a non-academic journal, therefore the ensuing reaction to Hauser's answer should be interpreted as an outer-academic sedimentation of scholarly debates on the proper form to assessing central features

<sup>4</sup> Daniel B. Rowland, *Mannerism – Style and Mood. An Anatomy of Four Works in Three Art Forms* [Yale College Series, Vol. 2], New Haven–London: Yale UP, 1964.

<sup>5</sup> I wish to thank Sam Graydon from TLS for providing me information about the authorship of the review. On the following pages all notes and commentaries, unless signalled, are mine. All three texts were found in Hauser's personal files kept by his heirs in Budapest, Hungary. The image of the original manuscript (fig.1) is reproduced with the kind permission of Hauser's assigns. In collating the documents pertaining to Hauser's literary estates I've been supported by the caring help of Ákos Sivadó from Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest. He should be credited for finding Andrews' review among Hauser's personal collection of articles citing his own published works. Hereby I wish to thank Csilla Markója, and the Research Group for Art Historiography at Research Centre for the Humanities for putting me in contact with Hauser's heirs.

<sup>6</sup> Keith Andrews was born Kurt Aufrichtig in Hamburg, Germany on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1920, and died on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1989 in Edinburgh. One of his greatest achievements is the monograph on the nineteenth century Nazarene movement, (Keith Andrews, *The Nazarenes. A Brotherhood of German Artists in Rome*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964.). Christopher White's obituary is a good testimony to Andrew's professional habitus and method also evidenced in the Hauser-review published below. White says: 'His catalogues are remarkable records of industry and achievement. Whereas increasingly print room curators flit around the world as part of the international exhibition circus to the detriment of work on the permanent collection, Keith, apart from carefully planned journeys abroad mainly for research stayed at home and got on with the essential duties of a print-room curator.' (Christopher White, 'Keith Andrews', *The Burlington Magazine*, 131/1039, October 1989, 707.) Surprisingly, Andrews is not to be found in the *Dictionary of Art Historians*, but – due to his contributions to the research of German artists in the diaspora – his name was included in the *Deutsche Biographie*. See: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd132193914.html> [17.11.2019].

of sixteenth century European art.<sup>7</sup> A quick look on Hauser's bibliographical references makes us conjecture that he was only partly aware of then-contemporary proceedings in the historiography of Mannerism. A second conjecture could also emerge that Andrews deliberately put this discussion outside of the academic field to signal that Hauser's take on the crisis of the Renaissance and the origins of modern art is a 'philosophical' enterprise, an 'essay' (in the sense of an *attempt*) and not a product of art historical diligence.

### Hauser's book, Andrews' review, and the 1965 Manchester exhibition

Hauser's book is almost exclusively indebted to the thesis that history makes sense if, and only if, it precipitates an understanding of the present. Conversely, some present evolutions in art and literature make it easier to investigate similar patterns and epochs of the centuries past.<sup>8</sup> Direct access to crises and shocks of contemporary history helps us understand the very basic structure of crises and disturbances experienced by our ancestors. Specific data are, accordingly, subordinate to the general structural framework in which they are nested. In line with these main ideas, Hauser ushered in neither a new paradigm in the international scholarship on Mannerism, nor a startling investigation of the social background of artworks from the mid-sixteenth century. His synoptic view was dominated by a general philosophy of history and put aside all the special issues in the methodology of historical research. One can admit that a practicing art historian can marvel at Hauser's mediocrity in the criticism of historical sources. Consequently, his synthetic account on the nature of Mannerism as a product of crises, political and economic insecurity proves to be a bold mixture of interpretive Marxism, cultural history and his own philosophy of art history investigating mainly the *interrelation of creativity and conventions*. Although the Mannerism-book was a direct sequel to his 1958 *Philosophy of Art History*, Hauser was following the line of argumentation he

<sup>7</sup> A few years before Hauser's book was published, the Twentieth International Congress of the History of Art in New York had delivered a synthesis of developments in the historiography of Mannerism. Hauser never made reference to the proceedings of that Congress. Comprehensive surveys of the actual state of its improvements and variations can be found in the following publications: Jan Białostocki, 'Der Manierismus zwischen Triumph und Dämmerung. Ein Forschungsbericht', *Stil und Ikonographie. Studien zur Kunstwissenschaft*, Dresden, 1966 (1964), 83–105; Elisabeth Cropper, 'Introduction', *Craig Hugh Smyth: Mannerism and Maniera*, Vienna: Irsa, 1992; Paul van den Akker, *Looking for Lines. Theories of the Essence of Art and the Problem of Mannerism*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010; Hans Aurenhammer, 'Manier, Manierismus, maniera. Zur Geschichte eines kontroversen Begriffs', *Maniera. Pontorno, Bronzino und das Florenz der Medici*, Ed. Bastian Eclercy, Frankfurt: Städel Museum/München–London–New York: Prestel, 2016, 15–23. We will come back later to the contributions of this Congress to frame the concept of Mannerism.

<sup>8</sup> Arnold Hauser, *Mannerism. The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art*, Vol. I: Text, Vol. II: Plates, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965. Here see: Vol. I, 4: 'The path that led to the revaluation of Mannerism was laid by modern expressionism, surrealism and abstract art [...]. A revaluation of Mannerism was feasible only for a generation which has experienced a shock like that associated with the origin of modern art.'

started more than a decade before in the *Social History of Art* in which he distances himself from the model that antiquity had a normative role in the development of modern art.<sup>9</sup> Modern art is not a deviation of artistic means from the ends set by the classical canon, but, like Mannerism, it is a subjective depiction of a severe social convulsion. The specificity of the book on Mannerism is, however, the illustrative elaboration of how creativity and conventions are correlative factors of creation. They are also inseparable tools of every scholar trying to grasp the essence of artistic activity.<sup>10</sup>

Andrews' review is, from the onset, an act of total rejection and his initially mild criticism turns into a downpour of denigrating comments. The author's starting point is an exhibition hosted by Manchester City Gallery from the 10<sup>th</sup> of March to the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1965, titled: *Between Renaissance and Baroque: European Art 1520-1600*. The so-called 'Mannerism' display curated by Friedrich Georg Grossmann was an emblematic event that marked the further definition of Mannerism, the description of its content and its psychological, and sociological, background.<sup>11</sup> However, it was not the first event of this kind after the 1939-1945 war that made sixteenth century art and its contemporary scholarly evaluation accessible to a wider public.<sup>12</sup> The 1965 Manchester exhibition had the explicit intention to critically challenge the use of the term 'Mannerism' as a common denominator for 'triumphant' European art created from the late period of Michelangelo to El Greco. The main idea flowing from Grossmann's conception was that the 'essence' of the epoch in question is highly elusive and that it is even more difficult to constitute a precise definition of it.<sup>13</sup> The exhibition itself was an in-depth survey of Mannerist art in general. It catalysed the discussions on sixteenth century European artistic production and addressed the divide between two ways of assessment: the first, for short, 'criseological' interpretation of Mannerism, which

<sup>9</sup> See Born, 'The World Art Histories', 15.

<sup>10</sup> Hauser starts his book on Mannerism with the following remark: 'I have been repeatedly reminded since the appearance of my *Philosophy of Art History* in 1959 [the German edition is from 1958] that that work did not deal thoroughly enough, as I myself was the first person to point out, with one of the main problems raised in it, that of convention in art [...]. I should like now to remedy this shortcoming [...]' Hauser, *Mannerism*, Vol. I, xvii.

<sup>11</sup> The catalogue prepared by Grossman in collaboration with Elisabeth Johnston (Keeper of the Paintings) lists 462 items (paintings, prints, sculptures, and tapestries).

<sup>12</sup> In 1955 the Rijksmuseum organized a public display under the title of *De triomf van het Maniërisme. De Europese stijl van Michelangelo tot El Greco* [The Triumph of Mannerism. The European Style from Michelangelo to El Greco]. For further analysis, see van den Akker, *Looking for lines*, 103–107.

<sup>13</sup> See: 'Editorial', *The Burlington Magazine*, 107/745, April 1965, 171. Here the author states that 'Dr. Grossmann was careful to avoid the word 'Mannerism' in the title of this remarkable exhibition', because of the highly problematic contents of a concept endowed with an extreme but vague flexibility: '[...] whenever we used the term 'Mannerism' we thought we knew what we are talking about, even though as time went on and we came to unmask more and more, efforts to define the term grew increasingly frantic, conscious as we became that it was losing its meaning for us.' ('Editorial', 171.)

originated in Max Dvořák's 1920 October Vienna lectures;<sup>14</sup> and the second, less interpretive, but analytical one – questioning it as a unitary style – advocated by Ernst H. Gombrich and many others.<sup>15</sup> Gombrich's texts were initially motivated by the aim to exclude from authentic scientific research all of the 'holistic' historians and theorists, who were interested in Mannerism as a full-fledged concept for sixteenth century pictorial style. But the historical figure of Dvořák could not been rendered thoroughly holistic based on his historiographical judgements. It is true that Dvořák, being an idiosyncratic follower of Riegl's method, transformed problems of art history into problems of intellectual history, and established tight links between observation and 'world view', between the historical gaze of elaborate research and the reconstruction of a global outlook. Still, one cannot but emphasize with Julius von Schlosser that Dvořák's later works follow a 'double track': 'a parallel movement of stylistic history and cultural history fusing those elements requiring an aesthetic reading with those of a logical historical nature'.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, his ideas about the process of concept-building were clearly closer to a functionalist view: on the first plane, he advocated for 'Mannerism' as a style; on the second, the masters, who were to be considered Mannerists, received their distinctive features from a common critical-reflexive relation to declining classical ideas of pictorial representation. These relations are functionally similar (documenting a personal, spiritual, anti-classicist approach) but not identical in their content.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> After Dvořák's sudden death his lecture held at the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry (today: *The Austrian Museum of Applied Arts*) under the Title *Über Greco und den Manierismus* (*On Greco and Mannerism*) was published from his *Nachlass* by his assistants Karl Maria Swoboda, and Johannes Wilde (Max Dvořák, 'Über Greco und den Manierismus', *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte. Studien zur abendländischen Kunstentwicklung*, eds Karl Maria Swoboda–Johannes Wilde, München: Piper, 1924, 259–276.) His views were adopted subsequently by many art historians verging on the sixteenth century parallels that uncover the basic motivations of modern art. In spite of the fact that many interpreters were considering mainly the 'late' (postwar) Dvořák (see Otto Kurz, 'Julius von Schlosser. Personalität, Metodo, Lavoro', in: *Critica d'Arte*, 11–12, 1955, 402–419.), a clear and objective split of his oeuvre could not be easily made. In a 1914 article he fought for a well-balanced description of the motivating factors behind artistic creation. The social environment or the global outlook of an epoch are valuable scholarly markers but they must be applied only if the investigation of individual artworks is completed and their psychological background is clarified. See: Max Dvořák, 'Über die dringendsten methodischen Erfordernisse der Erziehung zur kunstgeschichtlichen Forschung', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 27, 1974 [1914], 7–19., especially 16.

<sup>15</sup> Ernst H Gombrich, 'Mannerism: The Historiographical Background', *Norm and Form. Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* 1, London: Phaidon, 1966 [1961], 99–106.

<sup>16</sup> Julius von Schlosser, 'The Vienna School of the History of Art - review of a century of Austrian scholarship in German', translated and edited by Karl Johns, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 1, December 2009, 42. Later in the text Schlosser adds the following: '[As analyzed by Dvořák] the work of art is placed in the opposite spot from that of those strict formalists who would degrade it to a pure document of style and nothing else, *allowing it to appear abstractly objectified, but still closer to its primal phenomenon, its creation.*' Schlosser, 'The Vienna School', 42., [my emphasis – D.Z.].

<sup>17</sup> See: Dagobert Frey, 'Max Dvořák's Stellung in der Kunstgeschichte', *Max Dvořák zum Gedächtnis*, Wien: Österreichische Verlagsgesellschaft Eduard Hölzel, 1922, 8. Frey, a devoted



Grossman was, seemingly, a good and extremely cautious follower of the anti-essentialist school, highly sceptical towards generalizing notions. All these aforementioned concepts must be subjected to criticism. In the official catalogue of the exhibition, Grossman rebukes the great figures of Mannerism scholarship for 'too readily' equating 'the tendencies of their own time with those of the sixteenth century.'<sup>18</sup> Finally, he does not even attempted to add his own definition to the many conflicting ones for he saw that the general outlook or a wider meaningful totality of an epoch is simply not discernable.

The *Burlington Magazine's* editorial goes even farther and gets very close to suggesting that the 'concept' of Mannerism should be neglected when proper empirical research is carried out:

'The concept of Mannerism prevents us from seeing what we are looking at, and we must ignore it, if we are to make any progress [...]. We must re-enter the analytical stage and concentrate on details; new concepts will emerge out of new researches.'<sup>19</sup>

In the eye of the professionals, Mannerism was a problematic term requesting careful analysis. In the eyes of Grossmann and others, this balance was, however, not to be redressed through the delimitation of a central core of Mannerist 'style'. If a consensus view had to be established, it would be at the expense of overseeing the difficult cases of individual artworks.<sup>20</sup> Analytical methods were, if not superior to synthetic frameworks, just more sober and self-contained. The word 'Mannerism' should be used as an auxiliary term. The term names scholarly research, which studies a specific period of producing artworks. By defining Mannerism in this way, one could be rid of synthetic perplexities. The editorial quoted above applies this line of argument to Hauser's itself:

'If it is still legitimate to employ the term 'Mannerism' at all, as it is in the titles of Professor Württenberger's and Dr. Hauser's latest volumes, it should survive in our vocabulary only as a shorthand description of a given range of years.'<sup>21</sup>

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pupil of Dvořák's, makes a clear allusion to the functionalist account of Ernst Cassirer given in his 1910 book: *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff. Untersuchungen über die Grundfragen der Erkenntniskritik*, Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1910.

<sup>18</sup> F. G. Grossmann, '[Preface]', *European Art between Renaissance and Baroque. European Art 1520–1600* [Exhibition catalogue], Manchester: City Art Gallery, 1965, 6. He also admits that the sympathetic spirit of the 1920s scholars working on Mannerism 'was no doubt due in no small measure to the spiritual and anti-naturalistic trends of contemporary art.' (5–6)

<sup>19</sup> 'Editorial', *The Burlington Magazine*, 171.

<sup>20</sup> Gérard Mermoz ('Essence, reference and truth-value: the epistemological dimension of the critical text', *Art Criticism since 1990*, Ed.: Malcolm Gee, Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993, 48–67) gives a similar interpretation to most of the theoretical concepts coined by art historians.

<sup>21</sup> 'Editorial', *The Burlington Magazine*, 171. See also, Franzsepp Württenberger, *Mannerism. The European Style of the Sixteenth Century* [orig. in German entitled: *Der Manierismus; der*

Hauser's reviewers were of course not unanimous (i.e. not mostly negative) in their diagnoses. The more they consider Hauser's philosophical aims and interests in drawing a bigger picture of sixteenth century art, the closer they got to appreciate his efforts.<sup>22</sup> Outside of academia, the opinions of general readers were favourable towards his book, probably because it entered the market for representative art history compendia. It was of lesser importance to the book's market value that Hauser aimed at delivering a social history of art, which explicitly stood aside from reducing artistic to economic value. Denys Sutton's article from the *Apollo Magazine* is good example of appreciation and is conscious of those potential views contesting the work's basic virtues (which are, still, guarantees of its success as didactic material):

'This is one of those historical treatises which view the past with the eye of the present. It may turn out that the specialist will fault some of its findings and dispute some of its conclusions; yet even the most blasé student of its subject will be intrigued and inspired by the way in which this vast and intricate theme is treated.'<sup>23</sup>

### Then-contemporary perspectives on Mannerism

We will need a deeper understanding of then-contemporary academic debates, if wanting to understand Andrews' harsh critique of the content and actuality of Hauser's book. The main fracture lines in interpreting Mannerism were set earlier by the 1961 International Congress of the History of Art<sup>24</sup> supporting Ernst

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*europäische Stil des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Vienna: A. Schroll, 1962], New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963.

<sup>22</sup> Robert M. Burgess stresses two philosophical-theoretical traits of Hauser's work: his interest in considering art as a dynamic system of conventions and creativity, respectively his approach to see the difference of Mannerism and Baroque through the lens of the Cartesian based methods of analysis and synthesis (Mannerism being the 'analytical' form of inquiry). See: R. M. Burgess, 'Mannerism in Philippe Desportes', *L'Esprit Créateur*, 6/4, Winter 1966, 270–281.

<sup>23</sup> Denys Sutton, 'Mannerism: The Art of Permanent Ambiguity', *Apollo Magazine*, 1965/3, 224. For further positive reviews see: Francis Steegmuller, 'Union of Opposites', *The New York Times Book Review*, 10<sup>th</sup> January 1966; Derek Rogers, 'Mannerism Examined', *The Arts Review*, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1965; Edward Lucie-Smith, 'Mannerism and Modernism', *The Listener*, 18<sup>th</sup> March 1965.

<sup>24</sup> The complete preliminary program of the Congress had been published in the *Art Journal* XX/2, Summer 1961. According to it, the section discussing 'Recent Concepts of Mannerism' on 11<sup>th</sup> of September was to be chaired by Ernst Gombrich with the assistance of Norman W. Cannedy. The contributors were: Frederick Hartt, Wolfgang Lotz, E. K. J. Reznicek, John Shearman, and Craig Hugh Smyth. Jan Białostocki figured on the list of officially enrolled disputants. The edited texts of their contributions to the Congress can be found in: Gombrich, 'Mannerism'; John Shearman, 'Maniera as an Aesthetic Ideal', *Acts of the Twentieth Congress of the History of Art. Vol. II: The Renaissance and Mannerism*, 202–208.; Craig Hugh

Gombrich's characteristic assessment. His view of the historiography of Mannerism was pervaded by the critique of universalist methods in writing the history of art. Gombrich began to assert himself as a nominalist (i.e. *not* universalist, *not* realist) in its scholastic meaning:

'There are [...] nominalists in the sense of this ancient controversy, and who only acknowledge the existence of individual works of art, dismissing our categories as mere *flatus vocis*. They scorn concepts because they want to get down to facts. I confess that I have more sympathy for their attitude than for that of their opponents, but it has been amply proved that it, too, lands us in insuperable methodological perplexities.'<sup>25</sup>

According to Gombrich, despite certain limitations of historical nominalists, their legacy is still worth being followed: 'It is true that we cannot approach the past without preconceived notions, but nothing forces us to hold on to them if they prove unsuitable.'<sup>26</sup> Therefore, Mannerism-scholars should also subscribe to Karl Popper's method of trial-and-error and would have to abandon the key terms of 'classicism', 'progress', 'final culmination', 'downfall' or 'crisis'. They should do so even if the breakup itself is deemed too painful. All of these keywords could be directly eliminated through the upsurge of empirical and textual research and not through intensive work on conceptual knowledge. In Gombrich's view, the use of the old vocabulary of art styles could also be tested against the issue of Mannerism. Careful research could help us to understand that there is no substantive meaning of these concepts, and that their most distinctive features should be considered just representations of the process of how artists reacted to certain individual events.

Gombrich's commentators and critics would, later, stress the accuracy of his final question ('which concepts of Mannerism put forward in the last few decades can best help us [art historians]?'). At the same time, they also mentioned that the limits of a project of methodological individualism hindered his followers' attempts to discover comprehensive explanatory models.<sup>27</sup>

The very discreet, but circumspect approach of the 1965 Manchester Exhibition towards a unitary concept of Mannerism is clearly rooted in the historiographical tradition, which was defined by Gombrich's anti-essentialist, and nominalist engagement. Twenty years later, this general idea of a nominalist-sceptic view of 'style' still governed the curatorial program followed by exhibitions of sixteenth century Italian painting. These curatorial programs were elegantly sidestepping the question of whether art originating in this period could or could

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Smyth, *Mannerism and Maniera*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, with an 'Introduction' by Elisabeth Cropper, Vienna: Irsa, 1992 [1961].

<sup>25</sup> Gombrich, 'Mannerism', 99.

<sup>26</sup> Gombrich, 'Mannerism', 100.

<sup>27</sup> 'He clearly meant this as an invitation to test hypotheses, but in the following decades attempts to develop explanatory models appear to have been inhibited by the logical limitations of this proposal'. Cropper, 'Introduction', 12.



not be classified as Mannerist.<sup>28</sup> It was considered wiser to avoid the term 'Mannerism' and this is because the abundant variety of its contradicting definitions prevented the reader from reaching the point of logical clarity. Recent analyses, nevertheless, still warn us to use this label 'with extreme caution'.<sup>29</sup>

Keith Andrews' address, which stood clearly in the context of the English curatorial tradition, could be coherently interpreted using the tools of historiographical nominalism. This could be confirmed by his devotion to the circumspect treatment of historical records documenting specific artworks. Despite the fact that Andrews was interested in defining the characteristics of a group of art historical agents (who could, trivially, share common goals), he never accepted the existence of a 'group mentality' undisturbed by the personal differences in talent, financial state, and ambition. His obvious target was to minimize the use of pat formulas of naïve social psychology in art history. These historiographical procedures, coined by him as 'block responses' and 'umbrella judgements'<sup>30</sup> obscure the view of individualistic factors in artistic creation and, therefore, have to be relinquished as long as the relevant source material hasn't been precisely collated.

The originally twofold (nominalist versus universalist) methodological view of the nature of Mannerism was not kept for too long. Starting with John Shearman's presence in New York, and his contribution to the Congress, his interpretive source criticism<sup>31</sup> supported Mannerism as a tenable concept for a more or less unitary (but not at all homogenous) style of art history (against the background of the history of sixteenth century ideas). Subsequently, Shearman challenged three then-ruling commonplaces about the period labelled as the age of *maniera*:<sup>32 33</sup> (a) early twentieth century is structurally and contextually alien to the

<sup>28</sup> See the catalogue of the 1987-88 Washington D.C. exhibition on Rosso Fiorentino (E. A. Carroll, *Rosso Fiorentino: Drawings, Prints, and Decorative Arts. Exhibition Catalog of the National Gallery of Art. 25<sup>th</sup> October 1987–3<sup>rd</sup> January 1988, Washington D.C., 1987.*)

<sup>29</sup> Cf.: Stephen J. Campbell–Michael W. Cole, *A New History of Italian Renaissance Art*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2012, 212.

<sup>30</sup> Keith Andrews, 'Nazarenes and Pre-Raphaelites', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 71/3, 1989, 31.: 'What gets lost in such judgments is that within such groups, who work together or have ideals is common, some may be individualists and some better than others.'

<sup>31</sup> '[...] Mannerism does exist, with the same kind of reality (and no more) as the other style periods that are commonly acknowledged [...] Mannerist art is capable of standing on its own feet. It can be and ought to be appreciated or rejected on its *own* terms, and according to its own virtues, not ours.' (John Shearman, *Mannerism*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967, 15.) Shearman's book first appeared in January 1967 and was republished in Penguin's *Style and Civilization* series. It was much more popular than Hauser's *Mannerism*.

<sup>32</sup> Shearman's earlier article (Shearman, 'Maniera as an artistic ideal') was one of the first studies to restore the positive connotation to the term 'Mannerism'. Grossmann's preface also refers to it as the sole work to redeem the word's original meaning in compensation for the prevalent negative opinion that 'Mannerism' is 'not a very fortunate appellation'. (Grossman, 'Preface', 5.)

<sup>33</sup> Peter Burke characterized these features as answers to the three main questions about the epoch scrutinized: 'Dr. Shearman is concerned with three questions, *what* happened in Mannerism, *how* and *why*.' Burke, Peter, '[Review of] John Shearman: Mannerism', *The Burlington Magazine*, 110/786, 1968, 525. (emphasis mine – D.Z.).

age of Mannerism, which (b) was no reaction to High Renaissance but the 'logical extension' of it; (c) it is an erroneous assumption to see Mannerism as a style afflicted by a deep cultural 'malaise' of a society or of a *Weltanschauung*. 'Its birth', he formulates, 'was ideally easy and attended by no crisis.'<sup>34</sup> His approach was a new attempt to recast the positive meaning of 'Mannerism', stating that the minimal core of the concept is not *per definitionem* inconsistent with the practice of elaborate research, but grants the necessary framework for challenging persistent general assumptions. Highly acclaimed critical assessments of single works could be done with the endorsement of some general characteristics about a certain period. However, they will fail if we follow the unrealistic path of regarding 'periods of style, in themselves increasingly artificial as we go back further in history, as tidily homogenous'.<sup>35</sup>

Shearman's conception had, inevitably, its obvious limitations. His expertise in the history of ideas didn't support an interpretation informed by psychology, and, even more, by some aspects of social history. Through imputing the pursuit of 'stylish style' to sixteenth century art he evaded the commonplaces of 'anti-classicism' or 'crisis', but diminished the relevance of the undeniable social (i.e. cultural, economic, and political) determination on the artists' personal quest for their own self-governance. To mention just one possible point of concern, Sherman had not considered the impact of then-contemporary artistic conventions on the emergence and acceptance of virtuosity as an alleged artistic virtue.

On a later account, even Gombrich became more permissive regarding unitary features of Mannerism based on a revised analysis of his view on artistic conventions. Once more, he emphasized that archival gleanings accustomed him to managing without the generalized idea, according to which Mannerism 'was a manifestation of a profound spiritual crisis.'<sup>36</sup> At the same time, he then adopted the thought that Mannerism was no *strictu sensu* anti-classical style, but a post-classical enterprise, 'in a sense, parasitical on the classical'. In the previous passage, he had even given some clues to understand this 'parasitical' matter: some Mannerist artists were specific in that they were not ignoring the rules inherited from the Renaissance, but breaking them in a visible manner, where the rule and the deviation from the rule remain discernable:

<sup>34</sup> Shearman, *Mannerism*, 23.

<sup>35</sup> Idem. For further reading and the return of the sceptical tone in the historiography of Mannerism see Hessel Miedema, 'On Mannerism and *maniera*', *Netherland's Quarterly for the History of Art*, 10/1, 1979, 19–45. In this interpretation even those scholars who are careful to avoid some general assumptions about Mannerism (e.g. Shearman) fall prey to the 'myth of the disregard of content, by which is meant the immediate impression a work of art has on the viewer' (27.), Mannerism being just one peculiar period when artists exposed excessively their artisanal virtuosity instead of concentrating on the representation on certain contents. In return, Miedema's contention was that 'the art of the sixteenth century [...] is best typified not so much by Mannerist stylistic features as by an invention aimed at providing the maximum amount of information, whether or not concealed from the eyes of the uninitiated.' (30.)

<sup>36</sup> Ernst H. Gombrich, 'Architecture and Rhetoric in Giulio Romano's Palazzo del Te', *New Light on Old Masters*, London: Phaidon, 1986 [1984], 161.

‘[...] it seems to me important to emphasize that licence ceases to be licence if there are no rules to contravene. In architecture no less than in rhetoric there is an enormous difference between being ignorant of the rules and breaking them intentionally. In other words, the desired effect depends on the perceptions of a public that can appreciate the deviation from the rules.’<sup>37</sup>

### **Hauser as a philosopher of Mannerism, and three levels of theoretical awareness**

The main difficulty in dealing with this complex of events and concepts gathering around the keyword of Mannerism is that all the approaches mix different levels of abstraction. The most basic and concrete level would be that of art historical source criticism. On the second plane are the histories of ideas and epistemologies respecting social history setting the logical requirements of empirical research. On the highest level, there stands the philosophical, meta-theoretical enterprise that aims to characterize the motivations behind the research of history. All characteristic assessments of Mannerism mix these levels of theoretical awareness. Even more, none of the above-mentioned scholars, who were performing source criticism, ever wanted to refrain from theoretical debates. At the same time, historians of ideas and social historians never sought to bracket the everyday physical problems of craftsmanship. Last, but not least, no meta-theorists of art history had ever intended to fight the ambition to correct those pursuing empirical research.

Hauser himself acted mostly on the highest level of abstraction and regularly assessed issues in the history of ideas and, evidently, in social history. His most significant failure was, from a more charitable viewpoint, to miss those synthetic configurations Shearman and – a few years earlier, coming from a different institutional background – Craig Hugh Smyth have found in the history of ideas (‘stylish style’; problems of the artist as a virtuoso of refined technical skills; *maniera* as local post-classicism instead of an ideal type of rebellious anti-classicism<sup>38</sup>). And other failure resulted from Hauser’s general outlook being partly insensitive to minutiae of historic artworks and institutionally coordinated individual research. The origin of his method could be easily understood if seen under the auspices of three relevant points from the history of continental and, partly, East-Central European thought.

To begin with, Hauser treasured his roots in classical German philosophy and systematization theory put forward by his Budapest colleagues such as Béla Zalai and Karl Mannheim. Mannheim’s early investigations of the structure of human understanding, which integrated special fields of research in ethics, aesthetics, psychology, and sociology on the basis of uncovering the primary and ineradicable epistemological relations between the subject and object of knowledge. Mannheim shifted the question from ‘what is knowledge?’, towards the reflexive-

<sup>37</sup> Gombrich, ‘Architecture and Rhetoric’, 167.

<sup>38</sup> Cf.: Smyth, *Mannerism and Maniera*, 103.

transcendental inquiry of ‘what are the premises of knowledge?’<sup>39</sup>. This Mannheimian idea of subject-object correlation as a transcendental prerequisite of perception and understanding made a deep impact on the early Hauser’s aesthetic works. He was always faithful to the idea that a normative approach to the issues of ‘taste’ and ‘style’ should respect the correlation of different sources of knowledge: the subjective-psychological, the objective-material, and the contextual-sociological. None of these factors should be privileged in the analysis of art.

As a second point, one can re-emphasize that Hauser was an overtly philosophical author, who allotted to the classical domains of philosophy (e.g. theory of knowledge) a very generous agency. Like others<sup>40</sup> in the historiography of Mannerism, he used a *working definition* of those periods, wherever a strong epistemological shift had been carried out: from a quasi-religious faith in stable knowledge and order to a more complex, existentially imbibed period of doubt and scepticism. These meta-historical phenomena of shifts and transitions should not be restricted to a specific period or age canonized in the history of art, such as ‘Mannerism’ or ‘Expressionism’. Enquiries concerning the nature of these transitions would even help historians to recast the roles given to actors of a certain age and to challenge the unity of even more disputed periods, such as the Renaissance itself. To form a theory of Mannerism is to build a certain *dynamic* of analysing the dynamics of historical change.

Finally, Hauser took one core idea of European Enlightenment seriously: the philosophy of knowledge, theory of judgments, and moral philosophy are, on his account, intertwined fields of research, which have to be in a certain balance to avoid strong philosophical errors. An advocate of the republic of letters, he continuously pleaded for a global view of these various aspects, even if he was expressly interested in the external factors that modify our tendencies to accept the image of self-sufficient philosophy, art, and science.

Researching these different sources of human knowledge,<sup>41</sup> Hauser evaded with a certain kind of philosophical generosity the critical description of specific works. The philosophical balance of his oeuvre, logically, did not result in a philosophy that was acceptable by a jury composed of researchers in art history and

<sup>39</sup> Karl Mannheim, ‘Az ismeretelmélet szerkezeti elemzése. II. rész’ [‘Structural Analysis of the Theory of Knowledge. Part II’], *Athenaeum*, 1918, 315–330, especially 234. Hauser and Mannheim both received their degrees in philosophy at Budapest University in the same year. Mannheim’s thesis, a seminal work in his sociology of knowledge shared a rich set of ideas with Hauser’s doctoral work, ‘The problem of Aesthetical Systematization’ (Arnold Hauser, ‘Az esztétikai rendszerezés problémája’ [‘The Problem of Aesthetical Systematization’], *Athenaeum*, 1918, 331–357). Béla Zalai’s texts on the general theory of building systems of thought (Béla Zalai, ‘Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie’, *Archiv für systematische Philosophie*, 17/4, 1911, 363–422; 18/1, 1912, 1–44) were common references in Hauser’s and Mannheim’s works (Mannheim, ‘Az ismeretelmélet’, 235–237.; Hauser, ‘Az esztétikai rendszerezés’, 331.)

<sup>40</sup> See Elisabeth Croppers concise summary of Giulio Carlo Argan’s, and Amadeo Quondam’s works. Cropper, ‘Introduction’, 20.

<sup>41</sup> See Deodáth Zuh, ‘Arnold Hauser and the Multilayer Theory of Knowledge’, *Studies in East European Thought*, 67 (1–2), 2015, 41–59.

magistrates of the historiography of art. Yet, it could still open a new discussion on meta-historical issues concerning the ways of professing art history.

### Texts:

#### Style Fashioned in Time

[an anonymous review by Keith Andrews]

Arnold Hauser, *Mannerism. The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art*, Vol I-II & Daniel B. Rowland, *Mannerism – Style and Mood. An Anatomy of Four Works in Three Art Forms* – in: *TLS*, 15 April 1965, 288.

It is significant that the recent exhibition at Manchester of European art covering the years 1520 to 1600 was simply entitled 'Between Renaissance and Baroque', thus deliberately avoiding the term 'Mannerism' which had hitherto been applied haphazardly to this very period. For some time now there have been voices urging a more exclusive, and thus a more precise application of this connotation, and calling a halt to its indiscriminate usage.

Largely developed in this century – mainly during the interwar years – to distinguish those works of art that were felt to possess no longer the classical perfection of the High Renaissance before Raphael's death, nor as yet the exuberance of what is now called Baroque, it seemed a neat label for a well-defined group of Italian sixteenth-century artists and their northern followers. It was at first conceived chiefly as a manifestation of anti-naturalism (Max Dvořák) and anti-classicism (Walter Friedländer), until Ernst Robert Curtius suggested that similar trends could be observed also in poetry and in literature generally. As some of the hallmarks of Mannerism were thought to include a love of paradox and ambiguity, a tendency towards eccentricity and virtuosity *per se*, as well as a good dose of spiritual upheaval, it can be imagined that quite soon the original definition was felt to be far too limited and the interpreters were feasting on the possibility of getting to work on a concept so malleable and so vague. The term was expanded further and further and in no time the door was wide open to admit, with only the slightest manipulation, almost any non-conforming or neurotic figure in almost any field, regardless of period or nationality. No other concept among the vast storehouse of art-historical terminology, with the possible exception of Romanticism, has been treated in such a cavalier manner, with the result that has come to mean all things to all men. It would appear that Mannerism, like the measles, can be caught by anyone, at any time, in any country, and that the symptoms are invariable and easily recognizable.

It is probably impossible, at this stage, to revert once again to the strictly historical and non-pejorative application of this term. Dr. Hauser, at any rate, would certainly not act as an advocate for such a limitation. Ignoring all the warning signals, he bulldozes his way across any restricting considerations, feeling, on the contrary, that the term has been misunderstood and not interpreted to its fullest potential. Basing himself firmly on Dvořák's ideas, without, however, that great scholars' subtle perception, he hardly admits that much has been thought and written about Mannerism since the early 1920s. It is characteristic that the



overwhelming literature mentioned in the notes was published, mainly in Germany, before the last war. Even Friedländer is only quoted from his paper of 1925, as if Dr. Hauser was not aware of the complementary one four years later, nor of the fact that both have appeared in a handy English translation in 1957. This heavy reliance on sources and argument dating thirty or forty years ago give the whole – so far as it is not concerned with the author's speculations – a rather antiquated look, resulting frequently in the fighting of battles that have long since been won.

The author begins by perpetuating the *fable convenue* that Mannerism is a distinct and unified style. With the various artists working like cogs in a wheel, conscious of being called upon to uphold and develop something called 'Mannerism' – an abstraction into which any individuality is being submerged. This style is being interpreted as having been born out of a spiritual crisis which is, moreover, strongly akin to our own. 'The development of Mannerism marked one of the deepest breaks in the history of art, and its rediscovery implies a similar break in our own days',<sup>42</sup> we are told. This clears the way for the author's categorical statement, implicit in his subtitle, that Mannerism marks the point from which originated modern art, and modern man (whoever he is). In order to give this theory, and everything that follows from it, a semblance of justification, the author adopts the Alice-in-Wonderland recipe of injecting into his definition of Mannerism all the ingredients required later on to prove his various contentions. Thus he has no difficulty – working from prepared ground – in parading before his readers the oddest assortment of figures, all of whom can be accommodated under Mannerism's capricious skirts: paradox (Shakespeare and Donne); social and spiritual alienation (Marx, Proust, and Kafka); surrealism (Picasso); narcissism (Proust), and so forth – to give only a small sample. Almost anything can be proved, 'within the uncommon wealth of variations peculiar to Mannerism': not only that Tintoretto, Brueghel and El Greco are the first modern artists, Shakespeare, Cervantes and Donne the first modern poets, and Montaigne, Machiavelli and Galileo the first modern thinkers. All these are either called Mannerists or precursors of Mannerism. Whole epochs, too, can be equated without much trouble, so one as one juggles only with carefully selected propositions.

The introduction, entitled 'General', is given over to theorizing about the formative influences on Mannerism of science (Copernicus, Kepler), Protestantism, the concept of alienation (which has to be projected back into Renaissance from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), and – inevitably – psychology. In the final section of the book victims ranging from Shakespeare to Kafka all of whom are 'modern' because they are 'Mannerists', are inaugurated into the Sacred Circle. No one would deny that analogies of some facets inherent in what has been defined as Mannerism can be found in other periods and in a variety of arts and artists, but to draw the conclusion that before all these can be sensibly called Mannerists is foolhardy. The author for instance never explains why the year 1520 should be the *terminus ad quem* for the commencement for Mannerist characteristics, none of which are supposed ever to have occurred before. One would have thought that according to Dr. Hauser's requirements (ambiguity, spiritual torment, anticlassical structure,

<sup>42</sup> Hauser, *Mannerism*, Vol. I, 3.

distortion of reality), Botticelli, for example, especially in his last works, would have qualified for first-class Mannerist membership. No doubt Dr. Hauser's pyrotechnics of artists, poets, scientists, philosophers and their works, will dazzle and impress, just because of their kaleidoscopic variety and their colourful combinations, but once the squibs have been let off, the containers will not look so exciting in broad daylight.

This whole exercise has not even the curiosity of novelty, for exactly the same tricks have already been performed by Gustav René Hocke in *Die Welt als Labyrinth* (1957) and *Manierismus in der Literatur* (1959), of which Dr. Hauser is aware, for he mentions the former in his notes, although with the wrong date. Much of the material, for example the highlighting of the 'concento', the emphasis on 'humour' and many of the figures (Tasso, Marino, Góngora in the realm of literature for example) already appeared in Hocke's panorama, only that his list of dramatis personae is longer and more varied, and his assertions and analogies even wilder, though equally misguided and unconvincing. But at least he writes more entertainingly and there is none of that turgidity which disfigures large stretches of Dr. Hauser's text; he can write about Tintoretto, for example that

His 'spiritual' rebirth, as Dvořák calls it, does not really take place until 1560, when he has dropped his formalism without sacrificing the mannerism of his form, that is to say its complete prevalence in relation to reality, or more specifically, its independence of proportions and spatial coefficients.<sup>43</sup>

This sentence appears in the central part of the book devoted to a survey of Mannerist art in Italy, the North, and in Spain. This treatment of the visual arts, from which after all the concept of Mannerism was derived, is unobjectionable so far as it goes, except for its superficiality which even the heading 'outline' cannot excuse. The recitation of the barest facts with name after name trundled past hardly goes beyond the content of Antal's pioneering article of 1929,<sup>44</sup> with the addition of some more recent but already well-known clichés (for instance the rather flippant estimate of the Cavaliere d'Arpino). It is doubtful whether the author really looked with much interest at many of the works he mentions and illustrates, for few of them seem to make a point. Indeed, he confesses that some at least of the plates were included solely to help the reader form 'an idea of the Mannerist movement as a whole', without relation or relevance to any textual arguments, as these had to be omitted because they did not fit in this scheme. And even when a particular work is pointed out, its significance remains largely obscure. For instance the painting by Rosso (pl. 59),<sup>45</sup> which incidentally depicts more than merely the Madonna and Child, and which is supposed to illuminate the artist's temperament in contrast to Pontormo's, might, for all Dr. Hauser tells us about it, easily have been replaced by

<sup>43</sup> Hauser, *Mannerism*, Vol. I, 219.

<sup>44</sup> Andrews refers here to Friedrich Antal, 'Zum Problem des niederländischen Manierismus', *Kritische Berichte zur kunstgeschichtlichen Literatur*, 3–4, 1929, 207–256. For the English Version see: Frederick Antal, 'The Problem of Mannerism in the Netherlands', *Classicism and Romanticism*, New York: Basic Books, 1966.

<sup>45</sup> See Hauser, *Mannerism*, Vol. II.

the Pontormo drawing on the previous page. And there is more in Breughel's 'Storm at Sea' than a similarity in 'compositional lines' to Van Gogh's 'Cornfield'. However when the author discusses Breughel, he seems suddenly stimulating (as he is when he deals with Shakespeare), and his argument will at least arouse the reader's whole-hearted response, even if he cannot finally be persuaded that Breughel (or for that matter Shakespeare) is a Mannerist.

The illustrations, some obviously reproduced from old photographs, comprise a rather hackneyed selections of Italian Cinquecento art, although among the works of northern artist the reader is sure to find unfamiliar and not easily accessible items. However is forced to refer to the text to discover whether a painting is a fresco or an oil. In a book on Mannerism, the author has wisely refrained from mentioning the name of the illustrious baroque architect below the reproduction of the famous 'collonade' of the Palazzo Spada: but does he imply, by the caption accompanying the plate of the courtyard of the same palace, that Caravaggio actually designed it, or merely the decorations, or both?

For an author who professes an interest in the social history of art, his ideas, for example, about the significance of the international court portrait, or of the dissemination of the art of the Italian artists to the north are rather meagre. Colour, surely of the highest importance in Mannerist art, only mentioned in any detail by the time we reach El Greco.

It is difficult to conceive for whom this book is intended. Production, price and pretensions would seem to point to a reader with at least some scholarly interests. If so, what is one to make of the astonishing paragraph towards the end of the preface, where, after mentioning a 'bibliography' (which is nowhere to be found, the titles of books being interspersed among the notes), he continues:

[...] it should be noted that failure to mention a relevant work does not mean that it has been considered unworthy, but only that it not serve as an immediate resource for the present work. The bibliographical references have obviously and deliberately been left incomplete. The expert knows where to find the literature, and the references he will find here be sufficient for the general reader.<sup>46</sup>

Let the 'general reader' be warned, especially if he does not read German, that the majority of those books that would give him really enlightening and imaginative accounts of the essential themes are not mentioned at all.

Music is one of the few subjects that Dr. Hauser found impossible to accommodate into his scheme, an omission that Mr. Rowland makes good with an exhaustive examination of a madrigal by Gesualdo. His other exercises in analysis with comparative examples, of 'four works in three art forms' (paintings by Rosso and Pontormo, and John Donne's 'The First Anniversary') will probably have earned him good marks in seminars at Yale, but now they should be inflicted on a wider public, as part of the Yale College Series, seems somewhat pretentious. It is 'not for the first time' as the blurb states, that the term Mannerism has been

<sup>46</sup> Hauser, *Mannerism*, Vol. I, xix-xx.

extended to music and poetry. This again has already been done by the indefatigable Dr. Hocke, who specifically mentions Gesualdo in a chapter on the madrigal, admittedly without providing the higher mathematics of an analysis. Dr. Hauser will no doubt applaud not only Mr. Rowland's confession that he can detect 'common stylistic features' in his four chosen artists, but probably his contention that 'their mood' has so much in common with our age that we can 'for the first time begin to understand their style'.

**Style Fashioned in Time** [Arnold Hauser's reply and the Reviewer's Comment] – in: *TLS*, 29 April 1965.

'Sir, – I am reluctant to argue with reviewers, as most criticisms contain their own criticism. Your reviewer's bias against my book on mannerism (*TLS*, April 15) is, however, so manifest and his misinterpretation of my argument is so gross that some comment seems to me to be called for.

In his comparatively short account of a book about 200,000 words he thinks it worthwhile to take exception to a caption (pl. 59) mentioning that the work in question 'depicts more than merely the Madonna and Child', as the caption runs, but he fails to mention that the List of Illustrations gives the title in full and does not notice that in this, as in many other cases, the title is shortened for typographical reasons. By the way I cannot think of a drawing by Pontormo that could replace the plate in question, as he suggests. If there are unmistakable differences of style, that between Pontormo and Rosso is one of them. To spend a moment more on the trivialities your reviewer chooses to pick on, he censures me for quoting in my Notes a book dated 1927 instead of 1957, an obvious printer's error. But as no question of priority is involved or of possible confusion to the reader, the point seems hardly worth making. He imputes to me ignorance to the fact that Walter Friedländer wrote a second essay on mannerism besides the paper I quote. If he had read the paper more carefully and known Friedländer's writings better, he could have not failed to notice that I was acquainted with both papers and, in discussing the baroque, was indebted to both of them.

To come to more serious matters, the implication that I consider Marx a Mannerist seems to indicate more than a misreading of one passage or another; it implies a misunderstanding of the whole book. Marx's analysis of alienation is the keystone of my criticism of the mannerist outlook, and hardly anything could be less justified than suggesting that I consider him a mannerist. It is equally careless to assert that I 'equate' 'whole epochs' with mannerism. Your reviewer may have perhaps have overlooked the section of the book 'Mannerism or mannerisms?' which sets out to show that mannerism, like any style has not been and cannot be repeated, and he shows no signs of awareness that throughout the chapter dealing with the relationship of modern art to mannerism I emphasize the fact that outside the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries one can speak of at most 'quasi-mannerist' stylistic tendencies.

I could hardly have made it plainer that I am fundamentally opposed to the doctrine professed by E. R. Curtius<sup>47</sup> and his pupil G. R. Hocke,<sup>48</sup> who assume a periodical recurrence of styles.<sup>49</sup> Nothing is more definitely contested in my book than the assumption that mannerism can be in the reviewer's words 'caught like measles by anyone, at any time, in any country'. I carefully differentiate between that I call 'mannerist' and 'mannered' for the specific purpose of avoiding any semblance of sharing such views. This seems to settle the question of my alleged dependence on Hocke. Not only do we start out from different basic assumptions about the philosophy of history, but also we generally choose different subjects for analysis, analyse them from different points of view, and reach different conclusions. As for my alleged indebtedness to Frederick Antal's paper on Netherlandish mannerism, only a minute fraction of my book deals with his problems and, unfortunately, in spite of my respect for this author, I am unable to agree with either of the propositions referred to.

It is not correct to say, that I do not note more than a similarity of 'compositional lines' between Brueghel's 'Storm at the Sea' and Van Gogh's 'Cornfield with Ravens'. Nor is it correct that acknowledgement of mannerism as a distinct and unified style in my sense is a *fable convenue*; or that I used old photographs for any of the illustrations when newer ones were available. In fact no trouble was spared to find the best existing photographs, and in some cases unpublished originals were used. Your reviewer blames me for failing to indicate in

<sup>47</sup> Ernst Robert Curtius' famous book on *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (Trans. Willard R. Trask, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1983[1953]) deals with the concept of Mannerism in a truly different manner. Both Andrews and Hauser are missing the point in the twirls of their altercation. Curtius coins 'Mannerism' to designate a method in historiography where we tend to construct concepts of intellectual history with the 'least possible opportunity for misuse' (Curtius, *European Literature*, 273). Mannerism as a complementary term for Classicism is not stating the multiple recurrence of a given style, but the recurrence of a certain and regular reaction to Classicism in literature. Through 'Mannerism' one can escape the even more problematic term of 'Baroque' (n. b. literature) and move towards a minimum number of historical analogies and associations. The ensuing use of this concept of Mannerism helps to bypass common generalized assertions on the nature of post-classicist poetry (often referred to as 'Baroque'). Curtius makes it clear that 'this is not the place to discuss whether the word 'Mannerism' is good choice as the designation of a period in art history and to what extent it is justified. We may borrow it because it is well adapted to fill the gap in the terminology of literary science.' (Curtius, *European Literature*, 273.) In Chapter 15 he rallies round to support that Mannerism in literature could not be separated from its thousand years of prehistory and understood after the patterns of seventeenth century developments in European art history, and after all calls these kinds of scholarship 'wire-drawn interpretations on the part of *Geistesgeschichte*' mixing 'ignorance' with 'the demands of pseudo-art historical systems' (See: Curtius, *European Literature*, 291–292.). For further information, see: Blake Lee Spahr, 'Baroque and Mannerism: Epoch and Style', in: *Colloquia Germanica* 1, 1967, 78–100.

<sup>48</sup> Gustav René Hocke, *Die Welt als Labyrinth – Manierismus in der europäischen Kunst und Literatur*. Durchgesehene und erweiterte Ausgabe, herausgegeben von Curt Grützmacher, Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1987 [1957].

<sup>49</sup> Hauser levels these accusations against Curtius and Hocke in the general introduction to his book. See: Hauser, *Mannerism*, Vol. I, 37–40.

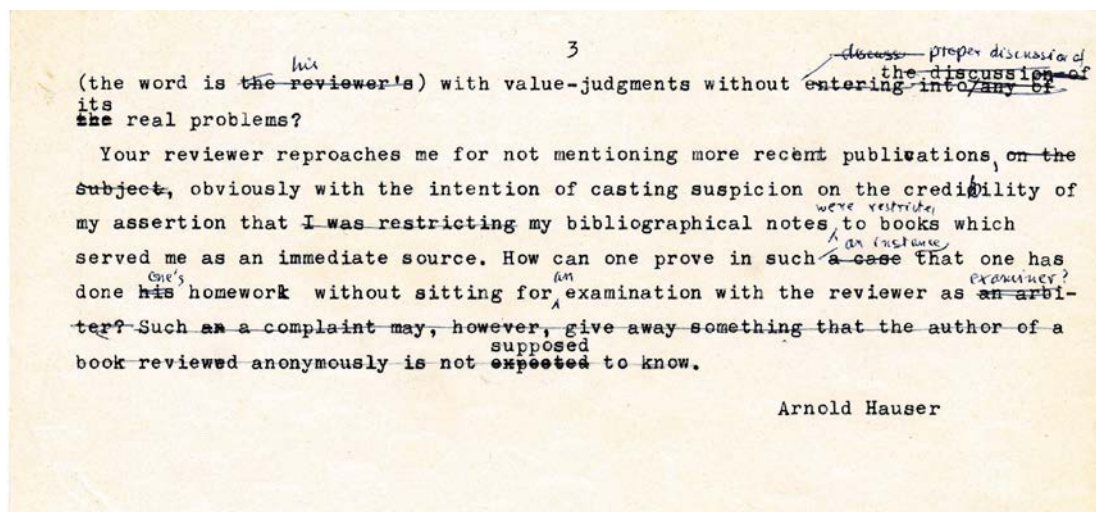


the captions 'whether a painting is a fresco or an oil', and says that the reader is forced to refer to the text to find out. May I point out that what he expects me to do is hardly ever done?

So much for the facts. I cannot begin to discuss your reviewer's judgements without seeming to set myself up as judge in my own cause. But is it fair for a reviewer of a book of this kind to 'juggle' (the word is his) with value-judgements without proper discussion of its real problems?

Your reviewer reproaches me for not mentioning more recent publications, obviously with the intention of casting suspicion on the credibility of my assertion that my bibliographical notes were restricted to books which served me as an immediate source. How can one prove in such instance that one has done one's homework without sitting for an examination with the reviewer as examiner?<sup>50</sup>

Arnold Hauser, 3 Eton Avenue, London, NW3



*Our Reviewer writes* [Same issue of *TLS*, 29 April 1965]: – The fundamental trouble with Dr. Hauser is, as I have criticized, and as he admits, that he conceives Mannerism to be a distinct and unified style, comprising a definite 'age' and adhering to rules and forms that can indiscriminately be applied to, and recognize in, other artists and art forms. No amount of arguing will lead anywhere, if he starts from such a premise. At one time the contents of the drawer, conveniently labelled 'Mannerism', were fairly predictable; now, with such keys as Marx's theory of alienation or Freud's analysis of narcissism, it is doubtful whether the drawer will open at all, let alone whether the label has any sensible meaning left. Such subtle

<sup>50</sup> See the last paragraph of the original manuscript (both first pages were lost, page 3 is here reproduced as fig. 1). Hauser finally omitted his last sentence: 'Such a complaint may, however, give away something that the author of a book reviewed anonymously is not supposed to know.' One can make the educated guess, that this last sentence contains a certain allegation toward a colleague of Hauser's, whom he wasn't prepared to name. There's no proof of the fact that Hauser knew the identity of his reviewer.

differentiations as mannerism, quasi-mannerism and mannerisms confuse the issue even further. As to Dr. Hauser's 'trivialities', the Rosso painting (which even in the List of Illustrations has not got its correct title), was merely picked out as example of the jumbled assemblage of a large part of the illustration, about which the author has little illuminating to say, being far too eager to go back to ride his hobby horse. This was also my point regarding the Brueghel painting, whose essential core is quite ignored. I never suggested that Dr. Hauser was dependent on Hocke, only that he performs similar tricks, nor that he was indebted to Antal, merely that his treatment adds hardly anything to a paper that was published thirty-six years ago. And to old photographs one example, and one nearest Dr. Hauser's doorstep,<sup>51</sup> may suffice: if he has ever glanced at Bronzino's 'Allegory' in the National Gallery since it was cleaned in 1958, he would realize that it looks significantly different from the illustration on pl. 58 in his book. There is nothing wrong with a select bibliography; my point was that Dr. Hauser stated explicitly that he had provided sufficient references for the 'general reader'. He must know perfectly well that this is not so.

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<sup>51</sup> Hauser mentioned his actual physical address at the end of his reply. Andrews refers to that information in a personal remark.